



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/772,646      | 01/30/2001  | Stephen J. Boies     | YOR920000605US1     | 2755             |

35526 7590 09/02/2005

DUKE. W. YEE  
YEE & ASSOCIATES, P.C.  
P.O. BOX 802333  
DALLAS, TX 75380

|          |
|----------|
| EXAMINER |
|----------|

CABRERA, ZOILA E

|          |              |
|----------|--------------|
| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

2125

DATE MAILED: 09/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/772,646

Applicant(s)

BOIES ET AL.

Examiner

Zoila E. Cabrera

Art Unit

2125

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-94, 129-176 and 178-190 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-7, 10-21, 23-25, 28-39, 43-54, 58-68, 72-82, 86-94, 129-176 and 178-190 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 8, 9, 22, 26, 27, 40-42, 55-57, 69-71 and 83-85 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-94, 129-176, and 178-190 are remained for consideration.

Claims 95-128 and 177 have been cancelled.

### *Response to Arguments*

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-94, 129-176 and 178-190 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 13-21, 23-25, 31-39, 46-54, 61-68, 75-82, 89-94 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by **Lof et al. (US 6,671,585 B2)** in view of **Yabutani et al. (US 6,775,595)**.

Regarding claims 1, 19 and 37, **Lof** discloses a method, system and computer program product for managing a utility service, comprising the steps of:

- analyzing relationship information representing a relationship of availability of the utility service and consumption of the utility service (Col. 13, lines 37-46; Col. 16, lines 35-42); and, sending a message over a data network to at least one region

of a utility service network to thereby modify utility service consumption based on the analysis of the relationship information (Col. 16, lines 40-58 and lines 64-67, please note that load shedding takes place at times of lowered production capacity wherein a message has to be sent in order to cut back the power to certain customers who have agreed to have their power cut back. See also Col. 11, lines 62-65; Col. 12, lines 25-31 and 43-45, i.e., the utility consumption of the hydroelectric would be modified according to the needs of the wind farm).

Regarding claims 2-3, 5-7, 13-18, 20-21, 23-25, 31-36, 38-39, 46-51, 53-54, 61-65, 67-68, 75-79, 81-82, 89-93, **Lof** discloses,

- the message instructs at least one region permitting increased power consumption (Col. 1, lines 65- Col. 12, line 2);
- the message instructs at least one region permitting decreased power consumption (Col. 12, lines 25-31; Col. 13, lines 41-46);
- the message modifies permitted power consumption for aggregated regions (Col. 16, lines 40-42, i.e., aggregated regions reads on any customer who has a contract in any region wherein the power is modified as agreed in the contract).
- the data network is the Internet (Col. 13, lines 5-9);
- the data network includes **at least one of** a wireless link (Col. 13, lines 12-14) and a Bluetooth connection;
- the data network contains at least one link sharing physical wiring with the utility service network (Col. 13, lines 5-12).

Art Unit: 2125

- sending the message to at least one region includes broadcasting the message to multiple regions (Fig. 22, steps 2201-2205, please note that message is sent to one or a group of candidate existing providers);
- transmitting the message as a multicast message to multiple regions (Fig. 22, steps 2201-2205, please note that message is sent to one or a group of candidate existing providers);
- the utility service is providing electricity (Col. 12, lines 25-31);
- at least one region is one of a single power consuming device, a subset of a plurality of power consuming devices, a portion of the utility service network in a geographic region, and a consumption management service provider (Col. 12, lines 59-67);
- the message instructs at least one region to modify at least one term or condition of sale (Fig. 27A, step 2701; Fig. 28B step 2817);
- the term or condition of sale is at least one of price and a pricing method (Fig. 28B step 2817);
- modifying at least one term or condition of sale includes varying the price of the utility service based on a rate of consumption of the utility service (Col. 32, lines 9-21);
- analyzing historical data relating conditions of sale of the utility service to consumption levels of the utility service; and generating the message based on the analysis of the relationship information and the analysis of the historical data.

Art Unit: 2125

Regarding claims 52, 66, 80, and 94, **Lof** teaches, a method, apparatus and readable medium for managing consumption of a utility, comprising:

- receiving a message from a utility service provider (Col. 33, lines 43-48, i.e., control message is sent to the alternative energy production facility); generating at least one message for at least one region of a utility service network, the at least one message instructing a region to modify utility consumption by the at least one region; and sending the at least one message to the at least one region (Col. 33, lines 58-65; Col. 12, lines 25-31).

However, Lof does not disclose said message including instructions for modifying utility service consumption of the appliance based on the analysis of the relationship information. But Yabutani discloses an energy saving service wherein a supervised load or appliance such as a motor is provided with inverter control operation data to save energy (Col. 3, lines 5-15). Yabutani discloses that a merit refund corresponding to the saved electric power consumption is calculated by referring to the difference between the present electric power consumption data and the inverter control operation data (Col. 3, lines 25-29, please note that the inverter control operation data would modify the energy of the appliance so that savings can be calculated). Yabutani further discloses that the inverter control operation data is collected from the supervisory system through a communication means (Col. 3, lines 50-55).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of the ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Lof with the system for

saving energy of yabutani because it would provide an improved energy system wherein the user would be allowed to obtain a desired energy saving service (Col. 2, lines 1-5).

4. Claims 10-12, 28-30, 43-45, 58-60, 72-74, 86-88, 129-176, and 178-190 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Lof et al. (US 6,671,585 B2)** and **Yabutani (US 6,775,595)** as applied to claims above **and futher** in view of **Johnson et al. (US 2004/0015433 A1)**.

Regarding claims 10-12, 28-30, 43-45, 58-60, 72-74, 86-88, 129-176, and 178-190, the same citations applied to claims 1-9, 13-27, 31-42, 46-57, 61-71, 75-85, 89-94, above apply as well for these claims. However, **Lof** and **Yabutani** fail to disclose associating a customer system with *a class of utility service*; identifying a class of utility service, and *changing the class of utility service*. **Lof** and **Yabutani** further fail to disclose auctioning or negotiating a class of utility service and changing dynamically or unilaterally the class of utility service; the change of class of utility service is based on a cost increase, decrease or available amount of utility service. **Lof** and **Yabutani** further fail to disclose auctioning or negotiating a class of utility service; and changing dynamically or unilaterally the class of utility service; the change of class of utility service is based on a cost increase, decrease or available amount of utility service.

But **Johnson et al.** discloses associating a customer system with *a class of utility service* and identifying a class of utility service, and *changing the class of utility service* (Page 4, [0021]; Page 2, [0009], lines 4-11). **Johnson** further discloses auctioning or

Art Unit: 2125

negotiating a class of utility service (Page 3, [0017], lines 10-20; Page 4, [0019]); and changing dynamically or unilaterally the class of utility service (Page 2, [0012]); the change of class of utility service is based on a cost increase, decrease or available amount of utility service ( Page 5, [0042], lines 21-46; [0025]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of the ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the power production facility of **Lof** and **Yabutani** with the bidding for energy supply to customers system of **Johnson** because it would provide an auction service that will stimulate competition and facilitate the consumer's ability to make economic choices between providers (**Johnson**, Page 3, [0017], lines 10-20).

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

5. Claims 4, 8-9, 22, 26-27, 40-42, 55-57, 69-71, 83-85 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

#### ***Conclusion***

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

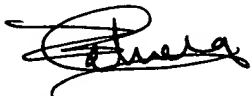
Any inquiry concerning communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to Zoila Cabrera, whose telephone number is (571) 272-



Art Unit: 2125

3738. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST (every other Friday).

If attempts to reach the examiner by phone fail, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard, can be reached on (571) 272-3749. Additionally, the fax phones for Art Unit 2125 are (703) 872-9306. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the group receptionist at (703) 305-9600.



Zoila Cabrera  
Patent Examiner  
8/31/05